

## The "76 Strategy" in Practice

# CAP Unites with Urban League in Albany

Last March the Congress of Afrikan People (CAP) published "76 Strategy," a declaration of political war on the "intermediate lackey sector" of society, including "petty bourgeois politicians (democrats, republicans or 'independents')..." The April issue of CAP's *Unity and Struggle* boldly proclaims that "the intermediate lackies must be grappled with, struggled against and exposed as practically bankrupt" in order "to win the workers to scientific socialism and revolution and away from reform or bribery."

The apparently revolutionary determination of this strategic perspective stands in pointed contradiction to CAP's concrete tactics for carrying it out. Electoral campaigns are a key aspect, and CAP unequivocally announces its willingness to "sacrifice our classical purity for the power of coalition and mass motion!"

The reformist program that lurks behind the hyper-militant rhetoric of "76 Strategy" is expressed in CAP's current participation in an electoral coalition in Albany, N.Y. Clarence Samuel Johnson, a black minister and Urban League member, is running for a seat on the

Board of Education. He is backed by a coalition which includes CAP, the NAACP, the Urban League and various church and community groups. The main components, according to the Albany press, are CAP and the Urban League, an odd coupling of Pan-Africanist disciples of Mao-thought and the most conservative of the petty-bourgeois, corporate and government-funded black organizations.

In fact, this alliance flows directly from the unprincipled combinationism which CAP and its leader, Amiri Baraka (formerly Imamu Baraka, and before that LeRoi Jones), have already demonstrated in the Black Women's United Front and the National Black Assembly. To attain the illusion of leading masses, Baraka embraces the programs of the "intermediate lackies" that he denounces in his press. Laurence Burwell, Albany Urban League executive director, described this coalition as "a first." "For the first time," he said, "we have been able to overcome our differences" (*Knickerbocker News and Union Star*, 17 September).

Johnson's electoral program indicates that this political unity was achieved by CAP's simply accepting the Urban

League's program: quality education, redistribution of educational funds, informing parents of their legal rights and a classic formula for union-busting, "accountability of teachers to the community." Johnson told a *WV* reporter that his platform explicitly does *not* include demands relating to desegregation of the schools or fighting budget cuts. Even within a program that narrowly focuses on educational issues, CAP has capitulated to the Urban League's sub-reformist "share the poverty" philosophy.

In a case where a working-class organization or black organization expressing the anti-capitalist aspirations of the oppressed minority masses advances an independent candidate against the bourgeois parties and politicians, a revolutionary Marxist organization could consider calling for a vote to this candidate. However, there is no basis for such critical support to Johnson's "independent" campaign, whose platform is, in some respects, more limited than that of a run-of-the-mill reform Democrat. But CAP, of course, is not even critically supporting this candidacy. It has politically liquidated into this coalition and

advances Johnson as its own candidate.

With the Albany coalition CAP comes full circle back to Baraka's former role as left mouthpiece and bullyboy for Newark's Mayor Kenneth Gibson, whose friends in the Urban Coalition and Prudential Insurance Co. are identical to the interests that back the Urban League. Moreover, it was on the issue of "accountability to the community" that Baraka launched a vicious attack on the Newark Teachers Union during the 1970 and 1971 strikes. Although the NTU was led by black teachers and advanced demands for educational improvements that would have benefitted black students (a majority in the city's schools), Baraka threw his forces into Gibson's strike-breaking campaign in order to preserve his opportunistic alliance with this black Democrat. Gibson's repeated attacks on Puerto Rican and black people subsequently forced Baraka to adopt a left posture, which echoes through "76 Strategy" and the advocacy of independent electoral activities. Nevertheless, the political essence of the Albany campaign is identical to Baraka's previous alliance with Gibson. ■

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### 19 September-16 October 1975

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Houston	86	70	122
Ithaca	39	40	97
Los Angeles	179	200	89
Madison	34	60	56
New York	394	400	98
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